

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in this application. Please amend the claims as indicated below without prejudice.

Claims 1-24 (Canceled)

25. (Previously Amended) An implant comprising:

a body with first and second ends and a plurality of through-holes extending between the ends;

a first and second cortical end cap disposed on each end of the body, at least one of the end caps comprising a height and a plurality of receiving regions having a depth and a bearing surface at an end therein; and

a plurality of cortical struts;

wherein the depth of the receiving regions is less than the height of the end cap so that the receiving regions do not extend completely through the end cap; and

wherein each cortical strut is disposed in one of the through holes of the body and mates in one of the receiving regions of the cap so that at least a portion of the struts bear against at least a portion of the bearing surface.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Previously Amended) The implant of claim 25, wherein the cortical strut received in the receiving region of the cap is press-fit therein.

28. (Canceled)

29. (Previously Amended) The implant of claim 25, wherein the implant comprises demineralized bone.

30. (Previously Amended) The implant of claim 25, wherein the implant comprises partially demineralized bone.

31. (Previously Amended) The implant of claim 25, wherein the body comprises osteoconductive material.

32. (Previously Amended) The implant of claim 25, wherein the body comprises cancellous bone.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Previously Amended) The implant of 25, wherein the struts are disposed generally parallel to each other.

35. (Previously Amended) The implant of claim 25, wherein the struts are cylindrical.

36. (Previously Amended) The implant of claim 25, wherein the struts have a triangular cross-section.

37. (Previously Amended) The implant of claim 25, wherein the struts have a rectangular cross-section.

38. (Previously Amended) The implant of claim 25, wherein the body is cylindrical.

39. (Previously Amended) The implant of claim 25, wherein the end caps are configured and dimensioned to distribute loading on the implant.

40. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 39, wherein the cortical struts are sized and configured to serve as load-bearing members.

41. (Currently Amended) An implant sized and configured for placement between adjacent vertebral bodies, the implant comprising:

a first cortical end cap having a top surface for engaging a vertebral body, a bottom surface and a receiving region disposed therebetween;

a second cortical end cap having a top surface for engaging a vertebral body, a bottom surface, and a receiving region disposed therebetween;

a cancellous body having a first end for engaging the bottom surface of the first cortical end cap, a second end for engaging the bottom surface of the second cortical end cap, and at least one through-hole extending therebetween;

at least one cortical strut disposed in the at least one through hole formed in the body and in the at least one receiving region formed in the first and second end caps;

~~wherein the first and second ends of the cancellous body do not engage the vertebral body;~~

wherein the at least one receiving region formed in the end caps comprise a recess that does not extend completely through the end cap; and

wherein the end caps are sized and dimensioned to serve as load-distributing members and the at least one cortical strut is sized and configured to serve as a load-bearing member.

42. (Cancelled)

43. (Currently Amended) The implant of claim 41, wherein the at least one cortical strut ~~received in the through hole of the end caps~~ is press-fit ~~therein~~ in the at least one receiving region.

44. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 41, wherein the at least one receiving region formed in the end caps has a bearing surface at an end thereof.

45. (Cancelled)

46. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 41, wherein the implant comprises demineralized bone.

47. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 41, wherein the implant comprises partially demineralized bone.

48. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 41, wherein the struts are disposed generally parallel to each other.

49. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 41, wherein the struts are cylindrical.

50. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 41, wherein the struts have a triangular cross-section.

51. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 41, wherein the struts have a rectangular cross-section.

52. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 41, wherein the body is cylindrical.

53. (Cancelled)

54. (Previously Presented) An implant sized and configured for placement between adjacent vertebral bodies, the implant comprising:

a first cortical end cap having a top surface for engaging a vertebral body, a bottom surface, a height dimension extending between the top surface and the bottom surface and at least one recess disposed therein;

a second cortical end cap having a top surface for engaging a vertebral body, a bottom surface, a height dimension extending between the top surface and the bottom surface and at least one recess disposed therein;

a cancellous body having a first end for engaging the bottom surface of the first cortical end cap, a second end for engaging the bottom surface of the second cortical end cap, and at least one through-hole extending therebetween;

at least one cortical strut disposed in the at least one through hole formed in the body and in the at least one recess formed in the first and second end caps;

wherein the first and second ends of the cancellous body do not engage the vertebral body; and

wherein at least one of the recesses formed in either of the first or second end cap has a depth less than the height of the end cap so that the recess does not extend completely through the end cap.